



CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Steven Falk
Interim City Administrator

FROM: Joe DeVries
Deputy City
Administrator/Chief
Resilience Officer

SUBJECT: Acceptance Of Portable Air Filters
from BAAQMD

DATE: March 13, 2022

City Administrator Approval

Date: Mar 29, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To Accept Portable Air Filters Valued At Two Hundred Sixty-Five Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Nine Dollars (\$265,539) from The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) To Provide Respite From Wildfire Smoke.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approval of the proposed resolution will authorize the City of Oakland (City) to accept portable air filtration devices that were awarded to the City through the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Clean Air Centers for Vulnerable Populations Grant Program (Program). The Program provides grant funding for portable air cleaners and retrofitting ventilation systems to create a network of clean air centers where people in vulnerable communities can find respite from wildfire smoke and other smoke events. Air filtration devices will be distributed to municipal facilities for use during poor air quality days (see **Attachment A**).

BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

In recent years, Oaklanders have been exposed to unhealthy air from wildfire smoke. In the past five years, Alameda County has experienced 31 days with an Air Quality Index (AQI) value of 151 or higher, making it the most impacted county in the Bay Area and qualifying it as a smoke-burdened community by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The City's Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP) Action A-1 (Fund Creation and Operation of Resilience Hubs), calls for the development of protocols and the enhancement of building systems to enable trusted community-serving facilities – including libraries, recreation and

community centers, and parks – to reliably serve their communities as places of refuge during smoke days.

The City's Emergency Services Management Division currently operates a network of Emergency Respite Centers that are open to the public during wildfire smoke events. The Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) serves children and families throughout Oakland. Additional air filters acquired through this Program will allow the City and OUSD to significantly expand this network to serve a larger number of Oaklanders.

This Program is funded by State Assembly Bill 836 as part of the California Air Resources Board's Wildfire Smoke Clean Air Centers for Vulnerable Populations Pilot Program (Wicks, Chapter 393, California Health, and Safety Code Section 39960, 2019).

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Staff applied for this Program to procure air filtration equipment to support improvements in indoor air quality at City and OUSD facilities, in areas with high existing pollution burden, and in locations which have the capacity to serve the community during emergencies such as smoke days or during other periods of poor air quality. The facilities were selected through discussions among relevant departments, with input from some community groups as well. Procuring needed air filtration equipment at no cost helps implement Council priorities for providing safe and resilient infrastructure while minimizing the financial impact to the City.

Staff plans to distribute portable filtration devices to 35 facilities, with the majority in vulnerable communities (See **Attachment A** for a list of facilities). These facilities include 20 municipal buildings that are well-known and frequently used by the community. These facilities include recreation centers, senior centers, and libraries that were selected for accessibility, proximity to vulnerable populations, and community trust. The City will also distribute air filtration devices to 15 OUSD sites to provide clean air spaces for school children.

As the City phases out the use of natural gas in accordance with ECAP Action B-5 (Plan for All Existing Buildings to be Efficient and All-Electric by 2040), staff will replace existing HVAC systems with electric heat pump systems, which have better air filtration capacity, by 2040. The portable filters acquired through this program are intended to provide a bridge to the longer-term solution of replacing HVAC systems in city buildings with heat pumps. Deploying portable air filtration devices using this Program will allow the City to provide the highest number of smoke respite centers in the short term. There is no faster alternative available to expand access to clean air centers which is why this grant opportunity is so vital to the City's short term work of increasing resiliency in frontline communities.

Providing additional spaces for wildfire smoke respite supports the Citywide Priorities of **Holistic Safe Community** and **Vibrant Sustainable Infrastructure**.

FISCAL IMPACT

The procurement of air filtration devices using this grant program will have minimal fiscal impact on the City. BAAQMD will purchase the equipment for delivery to Oakland Public Works for distribution and operation. This program will require staff time to keep track of the air filtration devices and to replace filters annually (see **Attachment B** for the draft agreement which includes grant reporting requirements).

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

The City has conducted substantial outreach and engagement with community groups and individuals across Oakland over the past three years on appropriate placement of air filtration equipment and which facilities are best suited to serve frontline communities. These have occurred in the outreach for the City's Equitable Climate Action Plan, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, and Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan. The City will conduct additional outreach to notify neighbors that additional air filters have been placed at these facilities.

The City received a list of recommended facilities for air filtration from Communities for a Better Environment. The City also coordinated with OUSD, which provided its own list of facilities that would best serve its community.

Oakland's Emergency Management Services Division works closely with relevant internal departments, as well as its Red Cross liaison and partners at the Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul, to determine appropriate locations for Clean Air Centers. Internal partners include Community Homelessness Services, Human Services, the City's disabilities coordinator, Libraries, and Parks & Recreation.

COORDINATION

Staff from Oakland Public Works, the City Administrator's Office's Sustainability and Resilience Division, and Oakland's Emergency Services Management Division have coordinated on selecting appropriate filter models, replacement filters, equipment distribution and grant reporting. This report, resolution and agreement was reviewed by the City Attorney and Finance Department Budget Bureau.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Acceptance of these funds will allow the City to expand its network of Emergency Respite Centers at a low cost. This is the most cost-effective strategy for accomplishing this goal and takes advantage of grant funding to support both infrastructure quality and expansion of emergency services to residents.

Environmental: Air filters will help address the combined negative effects of wildfire smoke and air pollution from other sources. As Oakland experiences the effects of climate change, additional air filtration is likely to be an increasing need.

Race & Equity: Air filtration devices will be distributed to municipal buildings in frontline communities which have seen the most negative impacts from climate change and pollution, including poor air quality and exposure to wildfire smoke.

ACTION REQUESTED OF CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To Accept Portable Air Filters Valued At \$265,539 from The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) To Provide Respite From Wildfire Smoke.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Daniel Hamilton, Sustainability Program Manager, at (510) 238-6179.

Respectfully submitted,



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Officer

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Attachments (2):

- A: List of buildings for placement of portable air filters
- B: Program Participation Agreement from BAAQMD